



**To: Tree City USA Communities**

**From: DCR Urban & Community Forestry staff**

**Date: February 1, 2016**

**RE: Tree City USA 2016 Applications (new and recertification) – DUE DEC. 31, 2016**

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Thank you for your interest in applying for or in becoming recertified as a Tree City USA. Tree City USA is a national honor given by the Arbor Day Foundation (ADF). Each state is responsible for reviewing the applications and forwarding them to ADF. DCR Urban and Community Forestry staff reviews each application to make sure each is complete, accurately reflects your program, and has current information. We are all proud of what our Tree City USA communities accomplish. We appreciate the work you do to earn this special recognition and appreciate your additional efforts to maintain such high standards.

**We encourage you to apply online using the [Online Web Portal](#) (it will remember a portion of your information from year to year), but you may submit a [Paper Application](#) if you prefer.**

If you use the web portal, please be sure there is a ***valid email address in the portal contact email field*** as this is how we will communicate with you regarding your application.

- Your application **MUST** be submitted by **December 31, 2016**. Early applications are welcome – *and will help us help you if there is missing information*. **Please note that the online portal will become active for 2016 applications in the fall of 2016.**

If using the paper version, please mail an ORIGINAL and one COPY of your application to:

**Mollie Freilicher  
DCR Community Action Forester  
P.O. Box 484  
Amherst, MA 01004**

- Your re-certification application and online login information should have been mailed to you directly by the Arbor Day Foundation. Web portal and paper recertification, Growth Award, and first-time applications are available at: <http://www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/apply.cfm>
- Please use the [following checklist](#) (on page 4) to help you compile the needed information to complete the application (online or paper version).

**Please do not e-mail us a copy of your application.**  
**If you wish to file electronically, please use the online portal: <https://portal.arborday.org/>**

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
40 Cold Storage Drive, PO Box 484  
Amherst, MA 01004  
413-545-5993 413-545-5995 Fax  
[www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr)



Charles D. Baker  
Governor

Karyn E. Polito  
Lt. Governor

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary, Executive  
Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Leo Roy, Commissioner  
Department of Conservation & Recreation

## How to Meet the Tree City USA Standards

### **STANDARD 1: Tree Board or Department**

[\*\(Return to checklist summary\)\*](#)

- If you have a **department**, please enclose a description from a municipal annual report, budget justification, or other existing description. If none of these exist, please describe where your department sits in municipal government, who staffs it, and what your responsibilities are.
- If you have a **tree board or committee**, please include the names of all members (including addresses/e-mails) and other documentation (if new: bylaws, brochure, mission statement, articles of incorporation, or minutes from adoption by town meeting or city council).
- For communities that **share responsibilities with a non-profit partner**, this application needs to be formally presented by the municipality with budget and program information representing both. Please be sure each partner is aware of the application's submittal.
- A narrative description of your program is always helpful.

### **STANDARD 2: Community Tree Ordinance**

[\*\(Return to checklist summary\)\*](#)

- **Communities in Massachusetts are automatically qualified for this criterion, as long as one of the following is included with the application:**
  - If you operate under the guidance of *M.G.L. Chapter 87*, please include **evidence that you enforce MGL Ch. 87** [a sample hearing notice (dated), correspondence] or that your city council or town meeting has adopted this law.
  - If you have adopted a **new ordinance, subdivision regulation, or other forestry policy**, please include it with your application. Your ordinance should mention Chapter 87. You may also provide a **web link** to where it can be downloaded. (We are in the process of collecting digital copies of all state tree-related ordinances.)

### **STANDARD 3: Community Forestry Program**

[\*\(Return to checklist summary\)\*](#)

- **2016 BUDGET:** Please include documentation for your total budget. **The budget must either be FY2016 or a budget for the calendar year of 2016.**
  - Because you are applying for an award for 2016, we cannot accept FY'17 budgets. Please be sure that the budget **clearly shows budget numbers for the tree program** (not the entire DPW, for example). Make notes to link this budget to the budget worksheet.
- **Important:** Please include **supporting documentation** from your municipality. Supporting documentation may include a budget printout, budget printed on letterhead, or letter on letterhead stating the tree budget.
- **For paper applications, fill out the REQUIRED [attached two-page worksheet](#) from the DCR Urban and Community Forestry Program.** This is important in evaluating the overall performance of the Tree City program and helps us demonstrate where funding is needed. The budget figures must be supported by documentation.
- **WORKPLAN:** As a Tree City USA you are **required to submit an annual work plan**. This demonstrates that your community looks forward in planning for the year and that you have a systematic approach to your urban forestry program. A work plan that is updated frequently

qualifies for this standard. Please include a total of trees planted, removed, and pruned in 2016. A sample work plan can be found [at the end of this document](#).

- If you are applying for a **Growth Award**, please note this section must demonstrate a **budget increase** over last year's budget.

#### **STANDARD 4: Arbor Day celebration and proclamation of Arbor Day**

*(Return to checklist summary)*

***To meet this standard, your application must include:***

- **Evidence of an Arbor Day celebration occurring in 2016.** This could be a dated clipping from the newspaper or a press release if the newspaper didn't cover the event, invitations, a program detailing speakers and entertainment for the event, thank you letters, speeches or speaking points, or photographs. Photographs alone will not suffice. **Be sure event materials mention Arbor Day.**
- Likewise, the proclamation of Arbor Day, **signed** by your Mayor/Manager or Select Board, must be **dated in 2016**. In Massachusetts, the last Friday in April is traditionally Arbor Day. You may proclaim *any day* Arbor Day, but you must give the date of *your* Arbor Day. Please submit a copy of your proclamation. You do not need to include the original with your application.
- Please be cautious about combined Arbor Day and Earth Day observances. If you choose one celebration for these two holidays, please explicitly document the Arbor Day portion of the celebration as stated above.
- **Do not assume that Earth Day = Arbor Day.** Tree City USA applications are sent to the Arbor Day Foundation, thus this emphasis. Likewise, be cautious about clean-ups, spring festivals, and the like. They are great events, but please make sure materials indicate that the event is also an Arbor Day celebration.

- ☐ **APPLICATION SIGNATURE** – Finally, **the application MUST be signed by the Mayor, City/Town Manager, or Chair of the Select Board.** Applications signed only by the tree program manager are not acceptable.

☐ **Growth Award applicants:**

This award is intended to recognize special accomplishments of Tree City USA communities. The basis of the award is *growth* in the program, documented by a budget increase (could be in the form of a non-governmental grant, a new budget line item, a new piece of equipment, or new position). Then, special efforts and projects, described in the application, will qualify an applicant for the award. Annual programs, even if they are extraordinary, will not alone qualify for the award. Unfortunately, the intent of the award is not to be a higher tier of Tree City USA awards for well-established and well-funded programs to earn each year. **Please document your special program or growth area with attachments. If you have questions on what kind of supporting documentation to include, please contact Mollie Freilicher and refer to Growth Award materials on the [Arbor Day Foundation website](#).**

#### **QUESTIONS?**

**Please contact:**

**Mollie Freilicher**      413-577-2966    [mollie.freilicher@state.ma.us](mailto:mollie.freilicher@state.ma.us)

## Tree City USA Checklist Summary

- ☐ Application postmarked/delivered by **December 31, 2016** or apply online by December 31, 2016.
- ☐ If mailing a paper application, submit **original** and **one copy** of the entire application (not just the cover sheet).
- ☐ **Standard 1:** Provide documentation of department and/or tree board/committee.
- ☐ **Standard 2:**
  - Attach documentation that the municipality has adopted Chapter 87 or evidence of enforcement of Chapter 87 (e.g., a tree hearing notice dated in 2016).
  - Attach copy of municipal tree ordinance, if you have one (or provide a web link).
- ☐ **Standard 3:**
  - Provide municipal budget documentation to back up your \$2/capita budget figure (must be FY'16).
  - Fill out the attached [two-page worksheet](#) (*Massachusetts 2016 TCUSA Standard 3 Worksheet*). (A version of this worksheet is part of the online portal.)
  - Attach municipal [Work Plan](#) with FY16 or calendar year 2016 accomplishments. You can upload your work plan in the "Additional State Questions" section of the online portal.
- ☐ **Standard 4:**
  - Attach 2016 (dated and signed) Arbor Day Proclamation copy– do not send original.
  - Attach evidence of 2016 Arbor Day celebration (dated).
- ☐ Application Signature
  - Signed by the Mayor, City/Town Manager, or Select Board.
- ☐ Submission
  - For paper applications, the signed application page should be the cover sheet on the top of the application packet; do not use binders or plastic covers when submitting your application. Simply staple or use a binder clip to secure the application together.
  - If using the paper version, please **mail an ORIGINAL and one COPY** of your application to:  
**Mollie Freilicher**  
**DCR Community Action Forester**  
**P.O. Box 484**  
**Amherst MA 01004**

**Please do not submit unnecessary amounts of information, or information that is not requested above.**

**Support letters are not needed for this application.**



Massachusetts DCR Urban Forestry  
TREE CITY USA PROGRAM  
Standard 3 Worksheet (Page 1)



~ This form must be submitted with your paper application for Tree City USA~

COMMUNITY: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ FY 2016 or ☐ Calendar 2016

**COMMUNITY CAPACITY QUESTIONS:**

**1) Who manages public street trees in your community?**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What certifications or degrees are held by the Tree Warden, Arborist or other members of your department?  
(Provide title/certification/#)

Do you contract with arborists or urban forest professionals to assist in your community? For what purpose?

**2) Does your community have a tree committee, citizen's group, or non-profit organization that advocates for community trees (or other urban natural resources)?**

Name of group: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact/e-mail (please attach e-mails/contact info as needed): \_\_\_\_\_

**3) Do you have any kind of tree survey, inventory or resource assessment?**

\_\_\_\_\_

When was it completed (and when updated, if ever)? \_\_\_\_\_

How have you used it? Actively, or does it 'sit on a shelf'? \_\_\_\_\_

**4) Do you have a pest detection or monitoring protocol?** \_\_\_\_\_

**5) Does your community have any kind of Urban Forestry, Open Space or Natural Resources Management Plan. (Please provide a web link to the plan.)**

☐ Urban Forestry Mgmt Plan (date: \_\_\_\_\_) ☐ OTHER Natural Resource Mgmt Plan  
☐ Municipal Open Space Plan (date: \_\_\_\_\_) Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**6) Cross-Program Communication:** We encourage tree wardens to be involved in planning board, conservation commission, and other such board decisions. How is cross-program communication encouraged in your community? Is there an ordinance or regulation requiring tree warden review of subdivision plans? Please explain how, if so, this works in your community. (Feel free to say it doesn't happen!)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7) Trees Planted \_\_\_\_\_  
Trees Removed \_\_\_\_\_

Trees Pruned \_\_\_\_\_



Massachusetts DCR Urban Forestry  
TREE CITY USA PROGRAM  
Standard 3 Worksheet  
Page 2



~ This form must be submitted with your application for Tree City USA~

**MUNICIPAL COMMUNITY FORESTRY EXPENDITURES**

The total budget figure should clearly link to the submitted FY'16 municipal budget – *if not, make notes on the municipal budget print-out to clarify* – and must equal or exceed **\$2/capita**.

Thanks to your feedback, we have modified the budget worksheet below. You may use additional/other categories that more closely reflect your municipal budget. We need **back-up documentation** from your municipality, which may include a **budget printout, budget printed on letterhead, or letter on letterhead**.

☐ FY 2016 or ☐ Calendar 2016

**Salaries**

Tree warden, tree crew, admin staff (may be based on a percentage of time worked on trees) \_\_\_\_\_

**Tree Planting**

May include cost of tree purchases, labor and equipment for planting, planting materials, stakes, watering, mulching, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

**In-house Municipal Tree Maintenance**

Include pruning, insect and disease control, storm response, fertilization, watering, stump removal, equipment, supplies, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

**Contracted Tree Maintenance Work**

**Vehicular Expenses**

Fuel, maintenance, depreciation, new/used vehicle purchases, insurance \_\_\_\_\_

**Public Outreach and Staff Training**

Advertising, public education, professional training, memberships, Arbor Day event expenses \_\_\_\_\_

**Resource Assessment Expenses**

Survey and inventory expenses, software, consultants to develop management plan. \_\_\_\_\_

**Tree Board/Volunteer Time** (\$10/hour, use educated estimate)

(e.g. # hours x # weeks x # people) \_\_\_\_\_

**Other**

Include any other expenses not already noted above (grant income, leaf/brush pick-up (20% is allowable), biomass recycling (20% is allowable), utilities (20% of utility work on tree is allowable), etc. \_\_\_\_\_

**Briefly describe:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>TOTAL MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES<sup>1</sup></b> .....	\$ _____
<b>COMMUNITY POPULATION<sup>1, 2</sup></b> .....	# _____

<sup>1</sup> Transfer these two numbers to Standard 3 on the application and attach this sheet to the application.

<sup>2</sup> Please get updated community population (2010 census).

## **Sample Work Plan**

### **City/Town of ... Tree City USA 2016 Work Plan**

#### **Assessments**

The Tree Warden determines the status of trees and schedules any necessary work. Work is scheduled based on priority. Twenty eight requests for tree removals were assessed and removal was deemed unwarranted as a result of resident inquiries in 2016.

#### **Pruning**

Pruning is a regular part of maintaining a healthy tree. If the Tree Warden determines a tree needs to be pruned, the tree is placed on the pruning list. Work is completed based on priority. Utility companies such as \_\_\_\_\_ also complete pruning in the City to maintain their overhead lines. \_\_\_\_\_ trees were pruned by the City in 2016.

#### **Tree Removals**

Public trees may only be removed with the consent of the City's Tree Warden. Only trees that are deemed dead, dying, or hazardous can be removed. The United States Department of Agriculture's [How to Recognize Hazardous Defects in Trees](#) defines a "hazard tree" as "a tree with structural defects likely to cause failure of all or part of the tree, which could strike a 'target'. A 'target' can be a vehicle, building, or a place where people gather, such as a park bench, picnic table, street, or backyard." If the Tree Warden determines a tree should be removed, the tree will be placed on the removal list. Work will be completed based on priority. Once a tree is removed, a stump will be left and the location will be placed on the stump removal list. Once the stump is removed, the area will be loamed and seeded. If the site warrants, it will be placed on the tree replacement list. There were \_\_\_\_ tree removals in 2016. The City also held two tree removal hearings at the request of residents.

#### **Stump Grinding**

All stump grinding is outsourced to an outside contractor. Work is completed based on priority. Once a stump is removed, the area is loamed and seeded. There were \_\_\_\_ locations in 2016.

#### **Annual Tree Planting Program**

Every year the City's Tree Planting Program replaces trees and fulfills requests for trees throughout the City. Trees are planted at the discretion of the Tree Warden. The City planted \_\_\_\_ trees in 2016 and plans on planting \_\_\_\_ trees in 2017.